

**Portola  
Courthouse for  
Plumas and  
Sierra Counties:  
Initial Study and  
Mitigated  
Negative  
Declaration**

April 2007

**Judicial Council of  
California**



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>Acronyn</b>	<b>Text</b>
AOC	Administrative Office of the Courts
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
City	City of Portola
DFG	California Department of Fish and Game
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
Judicial Council	Judicial Council of California
PM2.5	Particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter
PM10	Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NSAQMD	Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
Plumas Superior Court	Superior Court of California, County of Plumas
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SHEIR	2001 Sierra Highlands Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report
Sierra Superior Court	Superior Court of California, County of Sierra
Statement	City of Portola's 2001 Environmental Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan ()
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Woodbridge MND	2006 Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Woodbridge at Portola

## 1    **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

2    The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is the staff agency of the Judicial Council  
3    of California (Judicial Council). The AOC is responsible for implementation of the Trial  
4    Court Facilities Act of 2002, landmark legislation that shifts governance of California  
5    courthouses from California counties to the State. The State began negotiations for  
6    transfer of responsibility of all trial court facilities from the counties to the State in 2004.

7    The Superior Court of California, County of Plumas (Plumas Superior Court) has a leased  
8    facility in Portola; the County of Plumas transferred responsibility for the leased facility  
9    to the State in 2007. The Judicial Council is now responsible for the facility, and the  
10   AOC manages the facility for the Judicial Council.

11   The Superior Court of California, County of Sierra (Sierra Superior Court) has a leased  
12   facility in Loyalton for mediation of family law matters. Although the Sierra Superior  
13   Court currently holds court proceedings in Downieville, the County seat, over half the  
14   Sierra County's residents live in the northeastern Sierra Valley near Loyalton. Loyalton is  
15   approximately twenty miles from Portola.

16   The AOC proposes to acquire a parcel in Portola, construct a new courthouse facility, and  
17   operate the facility for cross-jurisdictional use by the Plumas Superior Court and Sierra  
18   Superior Courts. The project will provide improved space for current services, provide  
19   space for new judicial services, provide improved security, and provide improved parking  
20   services for courthouse visitors. This document describes the AOC's proposal for  
21   construction of the building and the proposed operation of the new courthouse

22   The City of Portola (City) prepared the Sierra Highlands Master Plan Draft  
23   Environmental Impact Report<sup>1</sup> (SHEIR) in 2000. The City prepared a Final SHEIR in  
24   2001, adopted Environmental Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations in  
25   2001<sup>2</sup> (Statement), approved the Sierra Highlands Master Plan Area development plan in  
26   2001, and included the development in the City of Portola 2020 General Plan. The City  
27   subsequently prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Woodbridge at Portola<sup>3</sup>  
28   (Woodbridge MND) development in 2006; the Woodbridge development consists of 398  
29   acres of the 422-acre Sierra Highlands Master Plan Area and supersedes the master plan.  
30   The Woodbridge development included 2.6 acres of land as Public/Quasi Public Use

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<sup>1</sup> City of Portola. 2000. Sierra Highlands Master Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Report, vol.1. Wade Associates. 238p.

<sup>2</sup> City of Portola. 2001. Environmental Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, Sierra Highlands Master Plan, Final Environmental Impact Report. 37 p.

<sup>3</sup> City of Portola Planning Department. 2006. Woodbridge at Portola: Environmental Initial Study and Tiered Mitigated Negative Declaration. 57p.

1 designation. The AOC proposes to construct its planned new courthouse facility on a  
2 portion of the Woodbridge development's Public/Quasi Public Use site.

### 3 **1.1 Statutory Authority And Requirements**

4 In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources  
5 Code Section 21000-21177) and pursuant to Section 15063 of Title 14 of the California  
6 Code of Regulations, the Judicial Council typically acts as the CEQA Lead Agency for  
7 courthouse projects. The Judicial Council considers a project's environmental impacts in  
8 its considerations for approval of the proposal project. If the Judicial Council finds that  
9 there is no evidence that the project (either as proposed or modified to include mitigation  
10 measures) may cause a significant effect on the environment, then the Judicial Council  
11 finds that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment and  
12 adopts a Negative Declaration for the project. Alternatively, if the Judicial Council finds  
13 evidence that any aspect of the proposed project may cause a significant environmental  
14 effect (after addition of mitigation measures), the Judicial Council determines that an  
15 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary to analyze project-related and  
16 cumulative environmental impacts.

17 As stated above, the AOC proposes to construct its planned new courthouse facility on  
18 the Woodbridge development's Public/Quasi Public Use site in Portola. Important CEQA  
19 considerations for the AOC's CEQA preparations include the City's recent SHEIR, the  
20 City's Statement for approval of the Sierra Highlands Master Plan, and adoption of a  
21 Mitigated Negative Declaration for the 388-acre Woodbridge at Portola development's  
22 site-specific environmental impacts.



## 1    **2.0    PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

2    The AOC proposes fee acquisition of a parcel in Portola, CA, construction of a new  
3    courthouse on the parcel, and operation of the courthouse for the shared use by the  
4    Superior Court of California, County of Plumas and the Superior Court of California,  
5    County of Sierra.

### 6    **2.1    Existing Facilities**

7    The Superior Court of California, County of Plumas provides services from four  
8    facilities. The court's primary courthouse is the historic courthouse in Quincy, and it has  
9    part-time branch courts in a county-owned building in Chester, a county-owned facility in  
10    Greenville, and a leased facility in Portola. Each branch court has a full-time clerk and is  
11    open daily for filings and questions. One of the court's judges travels to the branch  
12    courts; the judge holds small claims and traffic court once a month in Chester and  
13    Greenville and twice a month in Portola.

14    The Portola court is located at 161 Nevada Street in the city's commercial area and has  
15    approximately 4,200 gross square feet. It includes a single courtroom, a judge's chamber,  
16    space for a clerk, and a small amount of file space. The building has no dedicated parking  
17    spots, but parking is available on Portola streets.

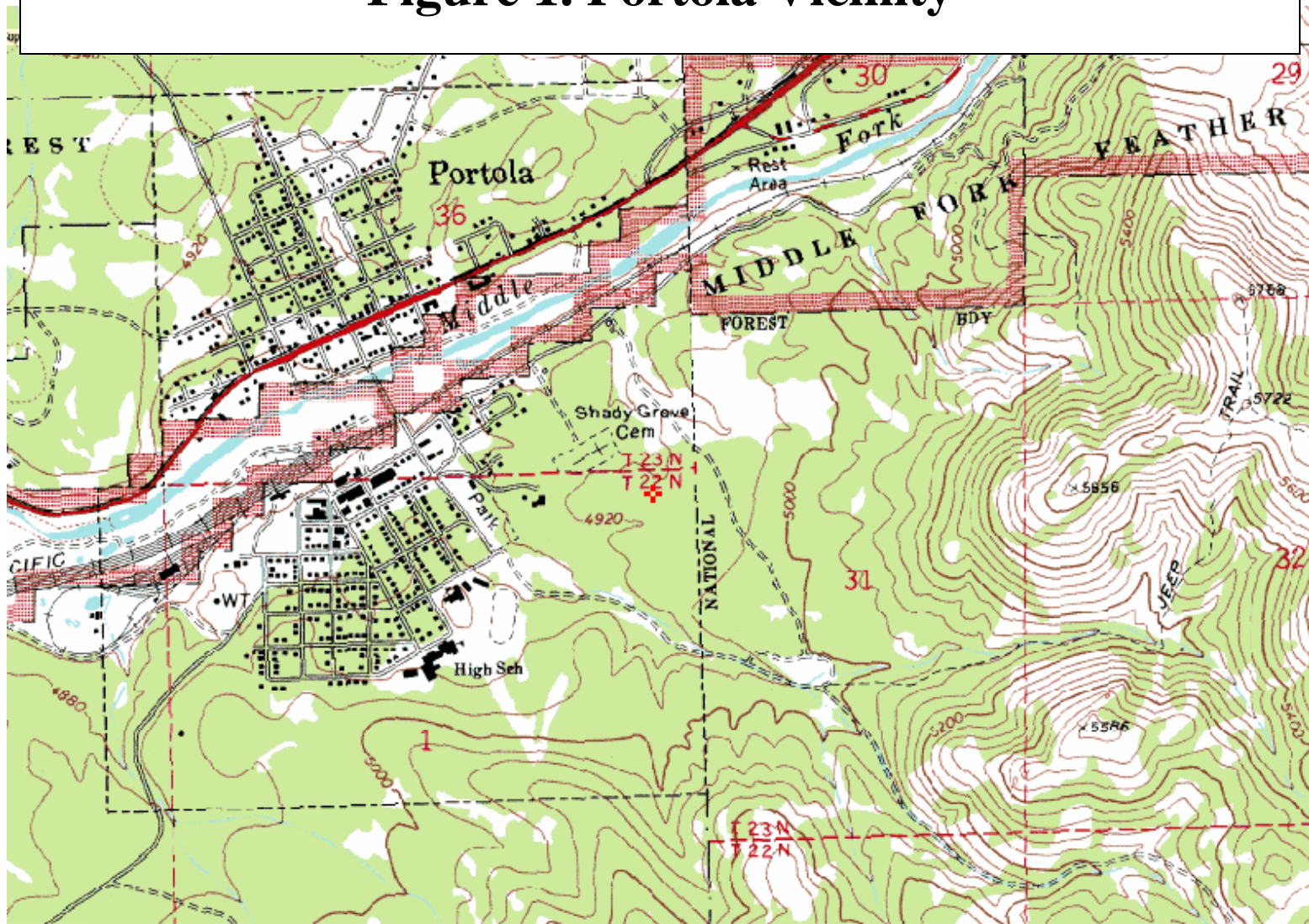
18    The Superior Court of Sierra County has two judges and a one-courtroom courthouse in  
19    Downieville. The court also leases a small facility at 604B Main Street in Loyalton for  
20    family matters; the non-court proceedings include a family law facilitator. Until 1995, the  
21    court held traffic and small claims courts in Loyalton once a month.

### 22    **2.2    Project Location**

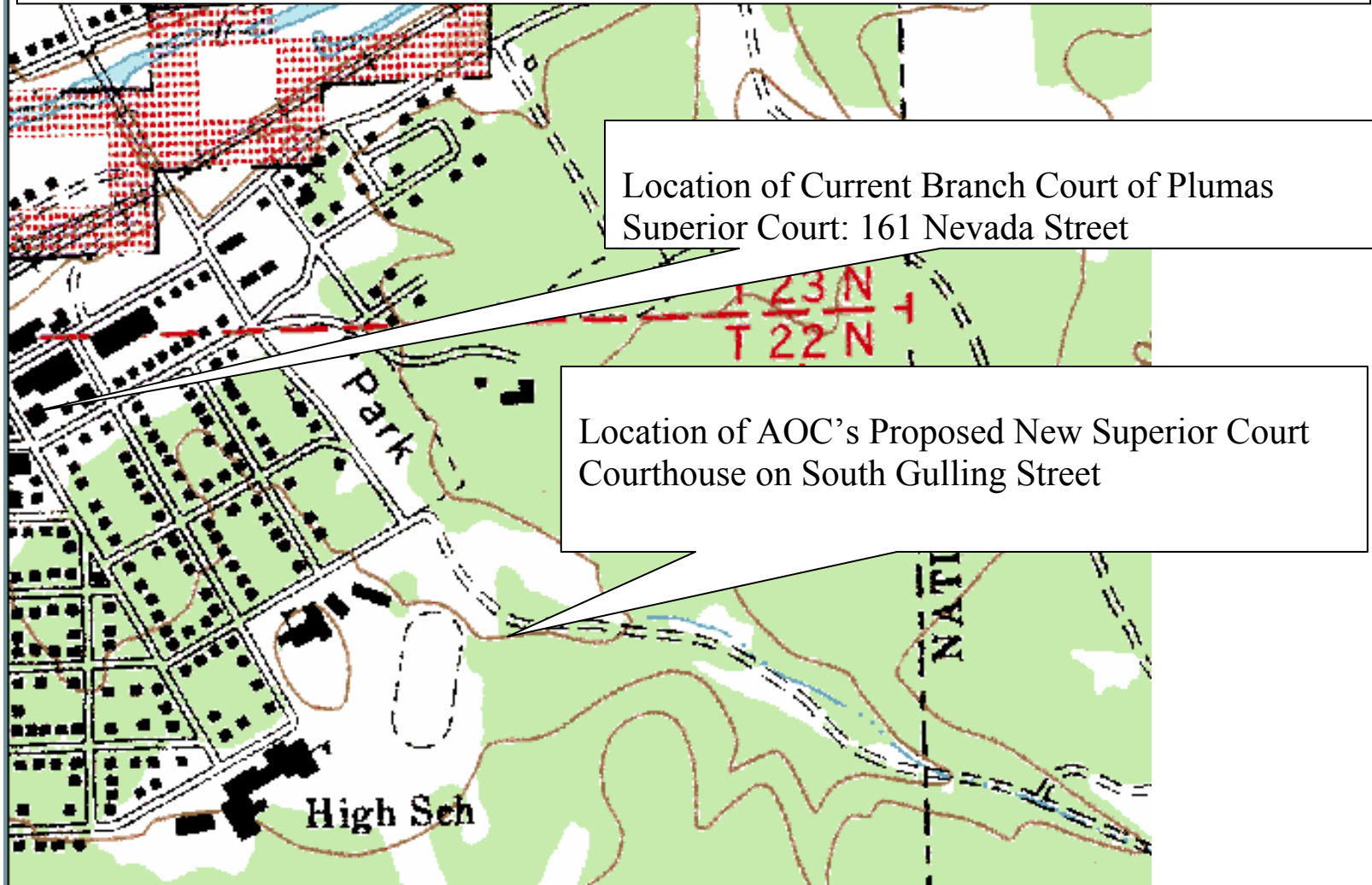
23    The AOC proposes development of an approximately two acre parcel in Portola for a  
24    shared courthouse for the Plumas Superior Court and the Sierra Superior Court. The site  
25    is along Gulling Street in Woodbridge development in Portola (see Figures 1, 2, and 3).

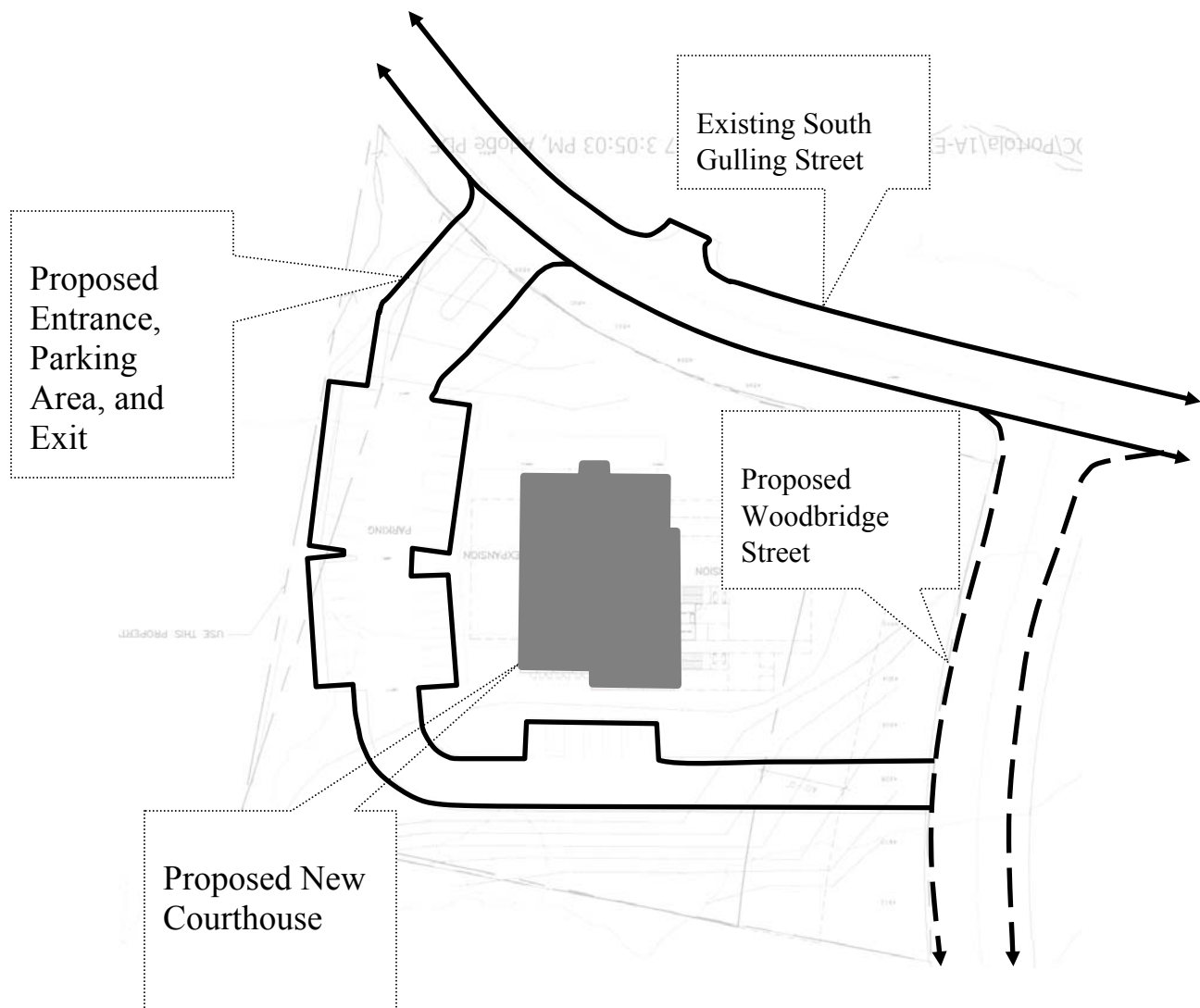
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**Figure 1. Portola Vicinity**



**Figure 2. Location of Proposed Courthouse in Portola**





**Figure 3. Proposed Project**

## 1    **2.3    Proposed Project**

- 2    The AOC proposed courthouse will have approximately 6,500 square feet of space and
- 3    provide traffic, family, and civil court services. There will be one courtroom with staff
- 4    support facilities. The courthouse will not have secured in-custody holding facilities,
- 5    sallyport, or sheriff's staff facilities.

1 The building will be a wood or steel structure with a stone exterior. The building will  
2 include a jury-capable courtroom; a jury deliberation room, a single judicial chamber,  
3 work areas for sheriff/justice partners, work areas for three staff workers, an entry  
4 vestibule with sufficient space for security screening, a lobby and children waiting area,  
5 public toilets, and building support areas. The courthouse will have several secured  
6 parking spaces for courthouse staff and approximately twenty public parking spaces.

7 The AOC expects to begin construction in 2008 and complete construction in 2009. The  
8 building will replace the existing leased Portola Branch Court and the leased facility in  
9 Loyalton; after completion of the new building, the Superior Courts will move from the  
10 leased facilities to the new courthouse.

11 Site preparation and grading will include removal of many existing trees, grading  
12 including cut and fill activities, and installation of utility infrastructure within the site  
13 from the adjacent street.

14 The AOC's project design, contracting, and construction activities include several  
15 measures to avoid environmental impacts. These measures include:

- 16 • Geotechnical studies to verify that the site can be developed as planned and to  
17 support design recommendations for foundation type, grading, pavement  
18 design, and other pertinent issues;
- 19 • Limit on construction activities that generate loud noises to the time period  
20 between 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM;
- 21 • Require the contractor to ensure that all construction equipment is properly  
22 equipped with mufflers, maintained, and operated;
- 23 • The project's design will include features to ensure compliance with Central  
24 Valley Regional Water Quality Control Boards' NPDES permit requirements;  
25 and
- 26 • Contract provisions that will require the AOC's contractor to receive Central  
27 Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board approval of a Storm Water  
28 Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and include inspection, monitoring, and  
29 maintenance of the SWPPP's best management practices as outlined in the  
30 contractor's bid package.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The AOC expects the AOC contractor's to SWPPP to include the following measures: (1) During conditions when substantial dust is present, water all exposed soil or apply soil stabilizers to construction areas, parking areas, and staging areas to eliminate substantial dust generation; (2) Cover any trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require any trucks to maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard and (3) If construction operations carry visible soil materials to paved areas or adjacent streets, sweep the affected paved areas at least once per day.

## 1     **2.4     Environmental Setting**

2     The city is at the east end of the narrow Humbug Valley. Beckwourth Peak (7,252 feet)  
3     flanks the city on the south, and peaks reaching to 6200 feet are north of the city. The  
4     mountains provide views of distant vistas from the town. The Middle Fork Feather River,  
5     the Union Pacific Railroad and Highway 70 run parallel through the valley and divide the  
6     city in distinctly separate north and south sectors. The city extends away from the river  
7     (and railroad) and into the forest on both sides of the valley. The city and surrounding  
8     area are gently sloping. The surrounding forest weaves through the town to create a  
9     unique, forested, rustic environment. The forests, mountains, and meadows of the area  
10    define the town's character.

11    The City's existing land uses are located in a clear, functional pattern. The primary  
12    institutional uses—including a hospital, City Hall, a library, a city park, a County Sheriff  
13    substation, the Post Office, and schools—are in a core area along Gulling Street.

### 14    **2.4.1 Existing Land Uses**

15    The project site is approximately two acres. Tree and scrub vegetation and trail bike paths  
16    occupy the site. The following land uses are immediately adjacent to the project site:

- 17           • North: Gulling Street and City of Portola Little League park;
- 18           • East: undeveloped land with open forest vegetation;
- 19           • South: additional undeveloped land with open forest vegetation and trail bike
- 20           paths; and
- 21           • West: Portola High School athletic facilities.

### 22    **2.4.2 Existing Zoning And General Plan**

23    The Town of Portola has designated the project site for Public/Quasi Public Use.

## 24    **2.5     Project Approvals**

25    The Judicial Council of California is responsible for approving the project. The AOC's  
26    construction contractor cannot begin construction until the Central Valley RWQCB has  
27    approved the contractor's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination permit application.

## 3.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

### 3.1 Project Information

Table 1. Project Information	
1.	<b>Project title:</b> New Portola/Loyalton Court
2.	<b>Lead agency name and address:</b> Judicial Council of California 455 Golden Gate Avenue San Francisco, CA 94102-3660
3.	<b>Contact person and phone number:</b> Jerry Ripperda, Environmental Analyst Administrative Office of the Courts Office of Court Construction and Management 2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400 Sacramento, CA 95833-3509  Phone: (916) 263-8865 Fax: (916) 263-8140 Email: Jerry.Ripperda@jud.ca.gov
4.	<b>Project location:</b> The project is in Portola, CA in Plumas County. The project site is on Gulling Street approximately 800 feet southeast of the intersection of Gulling Street and 4th Avenue.
5.	<b>Assessor Parcel Number:</b> Portions of parcels 126050039 and 126050040
6.	<b>General plan designation:</b> Institutional/Public
7.	<b>Zoning:</b> Public Space
8.	<b>Description of project:</b> Refer to Section 2.0, Project Description.
9.	<b>Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:</b> The following land uses are immediately adjacent to the project site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North: Gulling Street and City of Portola Little League park;</li> <li>• East: undeveloped land with tree and scrub vegetation;</li> <li>• South: additional undeveloped land with tree and scrub vegetation and trail bike paths; and</li> <li>• West: Portola High School athletic facilities.</li> </ul>
10.	<b>Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):</b> Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination permit)

### 3.2 Evaluation Of Environmental Impacts

This section analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. Table 2 lists the environmental resources evaluated in this Initial Study.



1 The environmental analysis in this section uses a slightly modified version of the CEQA  
 2 Guidelines' checklist for the environmental review process.<sup>5</sup> As a preliminary  
 3 environmental assessment, this Initial Study determines whether or not potentially  
 4 significant impacts exist that warrant additional analysis and comprehensive mitigation  
 5 measures to minimize the level of impact to environmental resources. The assessment  
 6 analyzes on-site, off-site, long-term, direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts for the  
 7 construction and operation of the proposed project. For each environmental resource, the  
 8 Initial Study poses questions with four possible responses for each question:

- 9                   • **No Impact.** The environmental issue in question does not apply to the  
 10                   project, and the project will therefore have no environmental impact;
- 11                  • **Less Than Significant Impact.** The environmental issue does apply to the  
 12                   project site, but the associated impact will be below thresholds that the  
 13                   Judicial Council considers significant;
- 14                  • **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated.** The project will have the  
 15                   potential to produce significant impacts the environmental resource.  
 16                   However, mitigation measures modifying the project will reduce  
 17                   environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level; or
- 18                  • **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project will produce significant  
 19                   impacts, and further analysis is necessary.

**Table 2. Environmental Resources Analyzed in This Initial Study**

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Aesthetics                      | • Land Use Planning             |
| • Agricultural Resources          | • Mineral Resources             |
| • Air Quality                     | • Noise                         |
| • Biological Resources            | • Population and Housing        |
| • Cultural Resources              | • Public Services               |
| • Geology and Soils               | • Recreation                    |
| • Hazards and Hazardous Materials | • Transportation/Traffic        |
| • Hydrology and Water Quality     | • Utilities and Service Systems |

<sup>5</sup> The checklist is available at [http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa/guidelines/pdf/appendix\\_g-3.pdf](http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa/guidelines/pdf/appendix_g-3.pdf).

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<b>Table 3. CEQA Checklist</b>				
<b>Environmental Resource</b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>I. AESTHETICS–Will the project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (See Section 4.01.1)				✓
b) Substantially damage scenic resources? (See Section 4.01.2)				✓
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? (See Section 4.01.3)			✓	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views? (See Section 4.01.4)			✓	
<b>II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES<sup>7</sup>–Will the project:</b>				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use? (See Section 4.02.1)				✓
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? (See Section 4.02.2)				✓
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use? (See Section 4.02.3)				✓
<b>III. AIR QUALITY–Will the project:</b>				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? (See Section 4.03.1)		✓		
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? (See Section 4.03.2)			✓	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			✓	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (See Section 4.03.4)			✓	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? (See Section 4.03.5)			✓	

<sup>6</sup> Pot. Sig. Impact.=Potentially Significant Impact; Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.=Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated

<sup>7</sup> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.

**Table 3. CEQA Checklist**

<b>Environmental Resource</b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES–Will the project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)? (See Section 4.04.2)				✓
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the DFG or USFWS? (See Section 4.04.2)			✓	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act? (See Section 4.04.3)		✓		
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? (See Section 4.04.4)				✓
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (See Section 4.04.5)				✓
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? (See Section 4.04.6)				✓
<b>V. CULTURAL RESOURCES–Will the project:</b>				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource as defined in § 15064.5? (See Section 4.05.1)			✓	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5? (See Section 4.05.2)			✓	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature? (See Section 4.05.3)				✓
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (See Section 4.05.4)			✓	
<b>VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS–Will the project:</b>				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault <sup>8</sup> , as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (See Section 4.06.1.1)			✓	
ii) Strong seismic ground-shaking? (See Section 4.06.1.1)			✓	

<sup>8</sup> As delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault

**Table 3. CEQA Checklist**

<b>Environmental Resource</b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? (See Section 4.06.1.1)			✓	
iv) Landslides? (See Section 4.06.1.1)				✓
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (See Section 4.06.2)			✓	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse? (See Section 4.06.3)				✓
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? (See Section 4.06.4)				✓
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? (See Section 4.06.5)				✓
<b>VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS—Will the project:</b>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? (See Section 4.07.1)				✓
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? (See Section 4.07.2)				✓
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (See Section 4.07.3)				✓
d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? (See Section 4.07.4)				✓
e) Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area, for a project located within an airport land-use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport? (See Section 4.07.5)				✓
f) Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area, for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip? (See Section 4.07.6)				✓
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (See Section 4.07.7)				✓
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? (See Section 4.07.8)		✓		
<b>VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY—Will the project:</b>				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? (See Section 4.08.1)			✓	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge so that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level? (See Section 4.08.1)			✓	

**Table 3. CEQA Checklist**

<b>Environmental Resource</b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? (See Section 4.08.1)			✓	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site? (See Section 4.08.1)			✓	
e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? (See Section 4.08.1)			✓	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? (See Section 4.08.1)			✓	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map? (See Section 4.08.1)				✓
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows? (See Section 4.08.1)				✓
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam? (See Section 4.08.1)				✓
j) Cause inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? (See Section 4.08.1)				✓
<b>IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING—Will the project:</b>				
a) Physically divide an established community? (See Section 4.09.1)				✓
b) Conflict with any applicable land-use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? (See Section 4.09.2)				✓
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? (See Section 4.09.3)				✓
<b>X. MINERAL RESOURCES—Will the project:</b>				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? (See Section 4.10.1)				✓
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land-use plan? (See Section 4.10.1)				✓
<b>XI. NOISE—Will the project result in:</b>				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? (See Section 4.11.1)		✓		
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels? (See Section 4.11.1)		✓		

**Table 3. CEQA Checklist**

<b>Environmental Resource</b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? (See Section 4.11.1)			✓	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? (See Section 4.11.1)			✓	
<b>XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Will the project:</b>				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? (See Section 4.11.1)				✓
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (See Section 4.12.2)				✓
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (See Section 4.12.3)				✓
<b>XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES</b>				
a) Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for public services including: i) Fire protection, ii) police protection, iii) schools, iv) Parks, or v) other public facilities? (See Sections 4.13.1, 4.13.2, 4.13.3, 4.13.4, & 4.13.5)				✓
<b>XIV. RECREATION</b>				
a) Will the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? (See Section 4.14.1)				✓
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? (See Section 4.14.2)				✓
<b>XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC–Will the project:</b>				
a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, a road's volume-to-capacity ratio, or intersection congestion)? (See Section 4.15.1)			✓	
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? (See Section 4.15.2)				✓
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? (See Section 4.15.3)		✓		
e) Result in inadequate emergency access? (See Section 4.15.4)				✓

**Table 3. CEQA Checklist**

<b>Environmental Resource</b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity? (See Section 4.15.5)			✓	
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)? (See Section 4.15.6)				✓
<b>XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS–Will the project:</b>				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? (See Section 4.16.1)			✓	
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? (See Section 4.16.2)				✓
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? (See Section 4.16.3)				✓
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? (See Section 4.16.4)				✓
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? (See Section 4.16.5)			✓	
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? (See Section 4.16.1)			✓	
<b>XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE–Does the project:</b>				
a) Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? (See Section 4.17.1)				✓
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.) (See Section 4.17.2)				✓
c) Have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (See Section 4.17.3)				✓



## 1    **4.0   ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

### 2    **4.01   Aesthetics**

#### 3    **Environmental Setting**

4    The AOC's proposed project site is on Gulling Street approximately 800 feet southeast of  
5    the intersection of Gulling St. and 4th Avenue. The site slopes slightly towards the  
6    northwest corner to the southeast. Trees cover most of the site, but several off-road  
7    vehicle paths extend through the project site.

8    Portola High School, the City's City Hall, the city's little league park, and Gulling Street  
9    are north of the courthouse site. From City Hall, trees and other buildings obstruct view  
10   of the project site. From the Portola High School grounds and the city's little league park,  
11   the project site is visible to the south although several trees partially obstruct the view of  
12   the project site. Construction of the proposed courthouse will replace the current  
13   generally wooded project site, but Mt. Beckwourth and its ridges dominate the view from  
14   the school grounds, the city's little league park, and Gulling Street so that the courthouse  
15   will be a very minor feature on the southward vista. In addition, the Woodbridge  
16   development's structures will add additional structures around the courthouse vicinity;  
17   the additional buildings will modify the southward scenic vista and make the courthouse  
18   harmonious with its adjacent surroundings.

19   Portions of the high school's athletic grounds and undeveloped wooded areas are west of  
20   the courthouse site. Ridges located approximately 2.5 miles east of the project site  
21   dominate the eastward scenic vista and the courthouse project will only occupy  
22   approximately two acres, so the courthouse will be a very minor feature on the eastward  
23   scenic vista. As the Woodbridge development adds additional structures around the  
24   courthouse vicinity; the additional buildings will modify the scenic vista and make the  
25   courthouse harmonious with its adjacent surroundings.

26   Undeveloped wooded areas are south of the courthouse site, but the Woodbridge  
27   development will add residents and visitors to this area. This area is higher than the  
28   courthouse site. Although the courthouse site is wooded, it is adjacent to the city's high  
29   school complex. Since the northward scenic vista already includes the city with a  
30   background of the Feather River and forested ridges beyond the city, construction of the  
31   courthouse will add development adjacent to the high school complex that will very  
32   slightly modify the mix of developed Portola, river scenery, and forested ridges.

1 Park areas and undeveloped wooded areas are east of the courthouse site, but the  
2 Woodbridge development will also add residents and visitors to this area. Much of the  
3 area adjacent to the courthouse site is approximately the same elevation as the courthouse  
4 site, while areas farther from the courthouse are higher than the courthouse site. The  
5 eastward scenic vista already includes the high school complex and the city with a  
6 background of the Feather River and forested ridges beyond the city; construction of the  
7 courthouse will add development adjacent to the high school complex that will very  
8 slightly modify the mix of developed Portola, river scenery, and forested ridges. The  
9 City's SHEIR concluded that the Sierra Highlands development will differ from the  
10 existing scenic vistas of native forest (AE-1) and degrade the existing visual character of  
11 the Sierra Highlands site (AE-2). The SHEIR's analysis determined that there were no  
12 available mitigation measures for the AE-1 project impacts, and that the impacts were  
13 significant and unavoidable.

14 The City's Woodbridge MND provided further analysis of the Sierra Highlands impacts,  
15 and it concluded that the impacts were not significant and unavoidable. The document  
16 emphasized that development does not necessarily negate the existing scenic vista and  
17 that the Woodbridge at Portola development will integrate with the existing visual  
18 character of the City of Portola. The Woodbridge MND concluded that the project did not  
19 have significant aesthetic impacts.

#### 20 **4.01.1 Will the Project Have A Substantial Adverse Effect On A Scenic Vista?**

21 **No Impact**—The City's SHEIR and Woodbridge MND evaluated the aesthetic effects of  
22 extensive development projects covering several hundred acres and extending over the  
23 prominent ridge that is south of Portola. In contrast, the AOC's courthouse project is not  
24 visible from Highway 70, central Portola, or southern Gulling Street because the project  
25 site is at the base of the prominent ridge and because trees in the City and around the  
26 project site obstruct views of the project site. In addition, the AOC's project site also  
27 differs from the SHEIR and Woodbridge MDN projects since the courthouse site is  
28 approximately two acres rather than the large areas of the SHEIR and Woodbridge MND  
29 projects. Since the AOC's project site is not part of the dominant ridge's scenic vista, is  
30 not visible from Highway 70 or central Portola, and covers only a small area, the AOC  
31 concludes that the courthouse project will have no impact on a scenic vista.

32 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.01.2 Will the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but**  
2 **not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a**  
3 **state scenic highway?**

4 **No Impact**—There are no rock outcroppings or historic buildings on the project site.  
5 Therefore, the project will have no effect on these scenic resources.

6 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

7 **4.01.3 Will the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or**  
8 **quality of the site and its surroundings?**

9 **Less Than Significant Impact**—Construction of the proposed courthouse will remove  
10 some of the existing vegetation and change the visual character of the site from primarily  
11 open forest to an office-like development with fewer trees. However, the surrounding  
12 sites include numerous structures of the adjacent high school complex, recreational  
13 facilities, and Gulling Street immediately adjacent to the project site. In addition, the City  
14 has already approved the Woodbridge's much larger development plans that will  
15 substantially alter the visual character of the surrounding area. The proposed courthouse  
16 will have wood and stone architectural design elements. Since the building will be  
17 adjacent to other buildings on lots surrounded by trees, the project design will be  
18 harmonious with the surrounding area. Although the project's courthouse will change the  
19 existing visual character of the site, the courthouse will provide attractive architectural  
20 elements and features on the site. The AOC's conclusion is that the courthouse project  
21 will be harmonious with the surrounding parcels, and the project's visual character  
22 impact will therefore be less than significant.

23 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

24 **4.01.4 Will the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that**  
25 **would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

26 **Less Than Significant Impact**—Although the proposed project will add new light  
27 sources for exterior and interior building lighting and security lighting on courthouse  
28 grounds, the project's lighting will not be substantial because the lighting will only  
29 provide safety and security lighting for one building. The project design will be  
30 harmonious with the surrounding area and will not include substantial smooth surfaces  
31 that produce substantial glare. In addition, the project will retain some of the site's  
32 existing trees and add new trees, and the trees will attenuate glare and views of the site's  
33 lighting. The duration of lighting would be limited to the evening until early morning  
34 hours, and the project's design will shield all light sources to minimize glare impacts on

surrounding properties, and landscaping would also block light from these properties. Furthermore, light sources are currently present from the adjacent high school buildings. Since the proposed project will add few new lights or sources of glare, the site is already adjacent to the high school complex and its lighting, and the City has approved the Woodbridge development which will produce much larger sources of light and glare, the AOC concludes that light or glare impacts from the proposed project will be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

## **4.02 Agricultural Resources**

### **4.02.1 Will the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?**

**No Impact**—The site of the proposed project is not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Therefore, the proposed project will not result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### **4.02.2 Will the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

**No Impact**—The project site has no agricultural zone designation or agricultural use, or Williamson Act contract. Therefore, there is no impact on these resources.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### **4.01.3 Will the project involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?**

**No Impact**—The proposed project does not involve any changes to the existing environment that could affect the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.

1   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

## 2   **4.03   Air Quality**

### 3   **Environmental Setting**

4   The project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Northern Sierra Air Quality  
5   Management District (NSAQMD). Table 4 shows NSAQMD's attainment designations  
6   for Plumas County. As shown in Table 4, particulate matter pollutants are the principal  
7   concerns for Portola's air quality and Plumas County's air quality.

8   PM2.5 pollutants have replaced PM10 as the primary particulate of concern within the  
9   NSAQMD.<sup>9</sup> Major contributors to both the PM10 and PM2.5 levels are woodstoves,  
10   forestry management burns, residential open burning, vehicle traffic, and windblown  
11   dust. Meteorological factors such as dispersing winds or pollutant-concentrating  
12   temperature inversions can relieve or exacerbate air quality problems. Portola and other  
13   nearby areas are subject to strong inversions and stagnant conditions in the winter. Those  
14   conditions, coupled with intensive residential wood burning, can result in very high  
15   episode PM2.5 levels. The particulate air pollution in Portola is typical for wood burning  
16   communities.<sup>10</sup> Higher values occur during the colder months when the area's population  
17   maximizes woodstove and fireplace use and stubborn temperature inversions persist on  
18   cold, calm days.

19

<b>Table 4. NSAQMD Attainment Designations For Plumas County<sup>11</sup></b>		
<b>Air Quality Component</b>	<b>Designation for National Standards</b>	<b>Designation for State Standards</b>
Ozone (1 hour)	A*	U*
Ozone (8 hour)	A	U
Carbon monoxide	A	A
Nitrogen dioxide	A	U
Sulfur dioxide	A	U
PM10*	U	N*
		N
PM2.5*	U	(Only the Portola Valley area is non-attainment for the State PM2.5 Annual standard.)

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<sup>9</sup> [http://myairdistrict.com/Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://myairdistrict.com/Executive_Summary.pdf), accessed on April 12, 2007

<sup>10</sup> City of Portola General Plan, available at [http://66.224.40.118:8080/abs/Books02/Downloads/GPpublicserv\\_facilities.pdf](http://66.224.40.118:8080/abs/Books02/Downloads/GPpublicserv_facilities.pdf), accessed on April 2, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Source: [http://myairdistrict.com/Air\\_Quality\\_Attainment\\_Status.pdf](http://myairdistrict.com/Air_Quality_Attainment_Status.pdf), accessed on April 12, 2007

NSAQMD staff participated in the development of City and Plumas County general plans to meet the strategic goal of keeping all jurisdictional areas out of federal non-attainment status for all pollutants. At the request of the City of Portola, the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District began monitoring particulate matter less than 10 micrometers (PM10) in downtown Portola in 1995. The Portola general plan includes a commitment to work with NSAQMD to develop and adopt a City of Portola Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), but NSAQMD has not completed preparation of an AQMP for Plumas County or the Portola area.

#### **4.03.1 Will the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**

**Potentially Significant Impact**—The project’s construction activities and court users’ vehicle traffic to the courthouse have the potential to cause air quality impacts.

Construction clearing and grading operations could produce fugitive dust impacts that conflict with the City’s general plan air quality measures. Sensitive receptors may be present on the nearby Little League fields, the nearby school grounds, or traveling on Gulling Street. The project’s small size will limit the magnitude of potential construction-related air quality impacts, and the AOC’s staff believes that clearing and grading operations will occur for only a short period of time. However, the AOC concludes that the construction-related air quality impacts could be significant.

Post-construction operation of the courthouse also has the potential to cause air quality impacts. The courthouse will not contain wood-burning stoves and the courthouse staff will not burn debris, therefore the courthouse will not generate PM10 or PM 2.5 pollutants. However, courthouse users’ vehicles will produce exhaust that could cause air quality impacts, and courthouse users’ vehicles may also entrain dust that will increase PM10 and PM2.5 pollutant levels from local streets, roads, and highways. However, the AOC concludes that vehicle-related air quality impacts from courthouse operations will be less-than-significant for the following reasons:

- Since the courthouse will replace the current Plumas Superior Court facility in Plumas, the new courthouse will produce very minor changes in courthouse trips for Portola-area residents of Plumas County;
- The new courthouse will enable Plumas Superior Court to offer expanded judicial services in Portola that will reduce Portola-area residents’ travel to Quincy for judicial services; and

- 1 • The new courthouse will enable Sierra Superior Court to offer expanded judicial  
2 services in Portola that will reduce eastern Sierra County-area residents' travel to  
3 Downieville for judicial services.

4 **Mitigation Measures:** The following mitigation measures will reduce construction-  
5 related air quality impacts to a level that is not significant:

- 6 • Air Quality 1—During conditions when substantial dust is present in construction  
7 areas, parking areas, and staging areas, water all exposed soil (or apply soil  
8 stabilizers) to eliminate substantial dust generation;
- 9 • Air Quality 2—Cover any trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or  
10 require any trucks to maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard; and
- 11 • Air Quality 3—If construction operations carry visible soil materials to paved  
12 areas or adjacent streets, sweep the affected paved areas at least once per day.

13 **4.03.2 Will the project violate any air quality standard or contribute**  
14 **substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?**

15 **Less Than Significant Impact**—As explained in Section 4.03.1, the small size of the  
16 project and the small change in courthouse-related traffic changes will limit the project's  
17 air quality impacts to a less-than-significant level.

18 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

19 **4.03.3 Will the project result in a cumulative considerable net increase of any**  
20 **criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment**  
21 **under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard**  
22 **(including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for**  
23 **ozone precursors)?**

24 **Less Than Significant Impact**—The region is currently classified as non-attainment  
25 with the State PM10 and PM2.5 standards. As discussed in Section 4.03.1, the project's  
26 air quality impacts will not be considerable. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the  
27 cumulative impacts will be less than significant.

28 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.03.4 Will the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant**  
2 **concentrations?**

3 **Less Than Significant Impact**— As discussed in Section 4.03.1, the project’s air quality  
4 impacts will be minor and will therefore not be substantial. Therefore, the AOC  
5 concludes that the cumulative impacts will be less than significant.

6 **Mitigation Measures:** Implement mitigation measures AIR QUALITY 1 through AIR  
7 QUALITY 3.

8 **4.03.5 Will the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial**  
9 **number of people?**

10 **Less Than Significant Impact**—During construction, diesel-powered equipment may  
11 generate exhaust that has an objectionable odor. However the construction-related  
12 generation of diesel exhaust odors will be only a limited time, and the site’s limited size  
13 limits the need for substantial use of diesel-powered equipment. In addition, the  
14 construction site will be over 400 feet from adjacent school buildings, over 100 feet from  
15 nearby Little League field parking areas, and over 200 feet from nearby Little League  
16 fields; the separation of the construction site from the nearby buildings and public areas  
17 will dilute the odors. Once the AOC completes the proposed project, the project will  
18 generate no new odors. The AOC believes the construction-related odors will occur for  
19 only a short period of time, will be limited in magnitude due to the small size of the  
20 construction operation, and will be sufficiently separated from potential nearby receptors  
21 to allow dissipation of the odors to a non-objectionable level. Therefore, the AOC  
22 concludes that odor impacts will be less than significant.

23 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

24 **4.04 Biological Resources**

25 **Environmental Setting**

26 Approximately two-thirds of the project site is primarily an open Jeffrey pine forest  
27 dominated by Jeffrey pine (*Pinus jefferyi*). There have been multiple timber harvests on  
28 the site during this century, such as thinning and salvage cuts following a 1989 wildland  
29 fire. There are also several cleared lanes and trail bike paths crossing the forested portion  
30 of the project site, and metal and ceramic trash piles also cover much of the forested



1 portion of the site. Most of the non-forested portion of the site is clear with no vegetation  
2 or sparse herbaceous cover.

3 There is a small, shallow (less than one foot deep and less than 1.5 feet wide) eroding  
4 water course in an area near the extreme northwest corner of the proposed AOC parcel.  
5 The eroding water course is downstream of a culvert along the boundary of the Portola  
6 High School's athletic field; the water course appears to be intermittent. It extends along  
7 the western shoulder of Gulling Street.

8 **4.04.1 Will the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or**  
9 **through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate,**  
10 **sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or**  
11 **regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S.**  
12 **Fish and Wildlife Service?**

13 **No Impact**—The proposed site is located on the margin of Portola's urban area and  
14 adjacent to Portola High School's athletic fields. The City's Woodside MND stated that  
15 no species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special status species are known to occur  
16 in the immediate Woodbridge development area. Also, there is no riparian habitat or  
17 sensitive natural community on the project site. The proposed site is not suitable to  
18 support any candidate, sensitive, or special status species; therefore, the proposed project  
19 would have no impact on special status species.

20 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

21 **4.04.2 Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat**  
22 **or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional**  
23 **plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish**  
24 **and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?**

25 **Less Than Significant Impact**—No riparian habitat or other sensitive natural  
26 community identified in local or regional plans is present on the project site or within the  
27 vicinity of the proposed project site. Therefore the proposed project will not have an  
28 impact on riparian or sensitive species.

29 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

30 **4.04.3 Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected**  
31 **wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including,**

1 but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct  
2 removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

3 **Potentially Significant Impact**—As previously mentioned, the proposed project site  
4 consists of open Jeffrey pine forest and does not contain any wetlands. Therefore the  
5 project will not have any wetland impacts. However, as discussed above, there is a small,  
6 shallow water course along the northwest corner of the AOC's proposed parcel. AOC  
7 staff investigated the water course area in April 2007; due to dry conditions of the 2006-  
8 2007 winter, AOC staff are uncertain of the wetland status of the water course area. The  
9 AOC's design does not include any structures or construction activities in the water  
10 course, but the AOC recognizes that unplanned construction activities could affect the  
11 water course area; therefore, the AOC concludes that there could be a potentially  
12 significant effect on the water course area.

13 **Mitigation Measures:** The following mitigation measure will reduce construction-  
14 related biological impacts to a level that is not significant:

- 15 • Biology 1—The AOC will survey an exclusion area for the water course area  
16 within the AOC's parcel. The AOC's contract specifications will exclude the  
17 contractor from operating in the water course area.

18 **4.04.4 Will the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native**  
19 **resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native**  
20 **resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native**  
21 **wildlife nursery sites?**

22 **No Impact**— As previously mentioned, the proposed project site consists of previously  
23 burned and logged open Jeffrey pine forest. In addition, the parcel has several  
24 recreational vehicle trails and pathways, and the site contains scattered refuse piles and  
25 debris. The site is adjacent to Portola High School athletic fields, Gulling Street, and  
26 Portola Little League fields. The site lacks appropriate cover and seclusion to be a native  
27 wildlife nursery site, and its location next to urban areas makes it inappropriate for a  
28 wildlife corridor. Therefore the proposed project would not interfere with the movement  
29 of any wildlife species.

30 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.04.5 Will the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting**  
2 **biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

3 **No Impact**—While approximately forty trees grow on the site, the site does not support  
4 any sensitive or riparian habitat or landscaped features that are designated as sensitive  
5 biological resources. There are no local policies or ordinances that apply to the proposed  
6 site. The proposed project would therefore not conflict with any local policies or  
7 ordinances.

8 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

9 **4.04.6 Will the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat**  
10 **Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat**  
11 **conservation plan?**

12 **No Impact**—There is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or other approved plan that  
13 apply to the proposed site. The proposed project would therefore not conflict with Habitat  
14 Conservation Plan provisions.

15 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

16 **4.05 Cultural Resources**

17 The SHEIR described cultural resources of the Sierra Highlands project site; the only  
18 cultural resources on the SHEIR site that the document noted were the presence of  
19 several “Trash Dump” resource sites on the project site. The SHEIR’s Phase I cultural  
20 resources report<sup>12</sup> states that the significance of historic dumps lies mainly in their  
21 potential for yielding information on day-to-day life unavailable through written or oral  
22 history. If one can connect the information to a particular sector of a community or a  
23 particular household, then any patterns resulting from quantitative or comparative studies  
24 would be meaningful in understanding how various households, ethnic groups, or other  
25 groups adapted during specific historic periods.

26 The cultural resources report identified one trash site on the site of the AOC’s proposed  
27 courthouse. It described the resource as a large trash deposit that includes an estimated  
28 1,500 cans including lead dot hole-in-cap condensed milk cans, various glass bottle

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<sup>12</sup> Windmiller, Ric and Dan Osanna. 2000. Phase I Inventory of Cultural Resources, Sierra Highlands, Portola, Plumas County, California. 119 p.

1 fragments, and other items. The report observed that collectors have extensively looted  
2 the site, and that excavated cans and bottle fragments are strewn across the site.  
3 According to the report's authors, the site does not meet the definition of a "unique  
4 archaeological resource."<sup>13</sup> For the Woodbridge MND, the project proponents prepared a  
5 follow-up report;<sup>14</sup> this addendum affirmed the conclusions of Windmiller and Osanna.

6 **4.05.1 Will the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of**  
7 **a historic resource as defined in § 15064.5?**

8 **Less Than Significant Impact**—As noted above, the proposed project site has potential  
9 historic resources. AOC staff observed trash piles on the site.<sup>15</sup> After review of the  
10 available cultural resources studies,<sup>12,14</sup> the AOC's staff concluded that the effects of the  
11 project on the site's cultural resources will not be significant.

12 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

13 **4.05.2 Will the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of**  
14 **an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?**

15 **Less Than Significant Impact**—As stated in Section 4.05.01, the AOC concludes that  
16 the impacts will not be significant.

17 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

18 **4.05.3 Will the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological**  
19 **resource or site or unique geologic feature?**

20 **No Impact**—As noted above, cultural resource surveys located no paleontological  
21 resources. The site is generally flat and has no unique geologic features. Therefore, there  
22 will be no impacts to unique paleontological resources, a paleontological site, or a unique  
23 geologic feature

24 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>13</sup> The authors stated that the most likely criterion of eligibility for the California Register would be its potential to yield important historical information. For this criterion, the most important integrity considerations were design, materials, and association; however, the consultants concluded the site does not meet these important integrity considerations.

<sup>14</sup> Brunmeier, Patric and Gary Scholze. 2006. Woodbridge At Portola Project. Historical Context Addendum to Windmiller and Osanna (2000)—Phase I Inventory of Cultural Resources, Sierra Highlands, Portola, Plumas County, California. 19p.

<sup>15</sup> Personal Communication, J. Ripperda to P. Desai, Nov. 16, 2006.

1   **4.05.4 Will the project disturb any human remains, including those interred**  
2       **outside of formal cemeteries?**

3   **Less Than Significant Impact**—As noted above, there are no known heritage resources  
4   on the site, but there is a remote chance that human remains exist on the site. In  
5   accordance with California Health and Safety Code section 7505.5, if the AOC's  
6   contractor encounters human remains, the contractor shall halt work in the area of the  
7   discovery and prevent any further disturbance to the area until the Plumas County  
8   Coroner determines the origin and disposition of the remains (pursuant to Public  
9   Resources Code 5097.98) and conducts appropriate consultation and treatment.

10   **4.06   Geology And Soils**

11   **Environmental Setting**

12   The project site is located in the Sierra Nevada near the base of Beckwourth Peak. The  
13   project site has an elevation of approximately 4,900 feet, and it is relatively flat with a  
14   slope of approximately 6%. The site's primary geological unit is a Quaternary lake  
15   deposit, and the soil is thin Badenaugh Very Gravelly Loam.

16   The SHEIR noted that the closest potentially active fault is the Mohawk Fault located  
17   approximately ten miles southwest of the SHEIR site. The most recent earthquake  
18   reported near this fault zone occurred in 1875. However, the SHEIR reported that the  
19   Honey Lake Fault was active and had greater significance for the Portola area. This fault  
20   had a magnitude 5.2 earthquake in 1979 near Doyle,<sup>16</sup> which is approximately 22 miles  
21   northeast of Portola. The SHEIR reported that the fault has a maximum moment of 6.9.  
22

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<sup>16</sup> Bryant, William. 1979. Earthquakes Near Honey Lake Lassen County, California. California Geology, May 1979, Vol. 32, No. 5.  
Available at <http://www.johnmartin.com/earthquakes/eqpapers/00000040.htm>. Accessed on April 13, 2007.

1 **4.06.1.1 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial**  
2 **adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as**  
3 **delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning**  
4 **Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other**  
5 **substantial evidence of a known fault?**

6 **Less Than Significant Impact**—The project will prepare a geotechnical report, and the  
7 project’s design will comply with the geotechnical report’s recommendations, the  
8 *Guidelines For Evaluating And Mitigating Seismic Hazards In California*,<sup>17</sup> and the  
9 California Building Code. Since the nearest active fault is approximately ten miles from  
10 the project site and the building sign will incorporate appropriate seismic design features,  
11 the probability of seismic rupture-related impacts for the proposed project site is highly  
12 unlikely. Therefore the impact is less than significant.

13 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

14 **4.06.1.2 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial**  
15 **adverse effects involving strong seismic ground-shaking?**

16 **Less Than Significant Impact**—As noted in section 4.06.1.1, the project’s design will  
17 comply with the geotechnical report’s recommendations, the *Guidelines For Evaluating*  
18 *And Mitigating Seismic Hazards In California*, and the California Building Code. Since  
19 the building sign will incorporate appropriate seismic design features and the most  
20 significant active fault is over twenty miles from the project site, the probability of  
21 substantial seismic ground-shaking impacts for the proposed project site is unlikely.  
22 Therefore the impact is less than significant.

23 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

24 **4.06.1.3 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial**  
25 **adverse effects involving seismic-related ground failure, including**  
26 **liquefaction?**

27 **Less Than Significant Impact**—Liquefaction occurs when saturated, loose, fine-grained  
28 sediment temporarily transforms to a fluid-like state due to earthquake ground-shaking.  
29 Since the project’s soils are shallow and well-drained, the potential for seismic-related  
30 ground failure or liquefaction hazard is low. Therefore the impact is less than significant.

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<sup>17</sup> California Department of Conservation, California Geologic Survey. 1997. Special Publication 117, *Guidelines For Evaluating And Mitigating Seismic Hazards In California*. 81 p.

1     **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

2     **4.06.1.4 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial**  
3             **adverse effects involving landslides?**

4     **No Impact**—Since the site is relatively flat and distant from steep slopes, there is no  
5     potential substantial landslide effect.

6     **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required

7     **4.06.2 Will the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

8     **Less Than Significant Impact**—The proposed project site is over one acre in area;  
9     therefore, the Sierra Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and the AOC will  
10    require the AOC’s contractor to comply with General Permit for Discharges of Storm  
11    Water Associated with Construction Activity. The permitting process requires the  
12    contractor to develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).  
13    Although the AOC’s contractor will clear, excavate, stockpile, and grade soil, the site’s  
14    relatively flat terrain and the contractor’s compliance with the SWPPP will ensure that  
15    the potential for substantial soil erosion is low. Therefore the impact is less than  
16    significant.

17    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

18    **4.06.3 Will the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or**  
19             **that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially**  
20             **result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence,**  
21             **liquefaction, or collapse?**

22    **No Impact**—The project site is relatively flat; the site’s primary geological unit is a  
23    Quaternary lake deposit, and the soil is thin Badenaugh Very Gravelly Loam overlying  
24    the rock. As stated above, the project will prepare a geotechnical report, and the project’s  
25    design will comply with the geotechnical report’s recommendations. Since the proposed  
26    project site is not within a potential liquefaction zone or on a geologic unit or soil that is  
27    unstable and the project design will incorporate geotechnical recommendations, there is  
28    very low potential of landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or soil  
29    collapse. Therefore the impact is less than significant..

30    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.06.4 Will the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B**  
2 **of the California Building Code (2001), creating substantial risks to life**  
3 **or property?**

4 **No Impact**—Since the site’s soils are gravelly loam overlying the rock with high  
5 infiltration rates and somewhat excessive soil drainage and depth to the ground water  
6 surface is likely to be more than six feet, the site is not located in an area with potential  
7 expansive soil.

8 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

9 **4.06.5 Will the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of**  
10 **septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers**  
11 **are not available for the disposal of wastewater?**

12 **No Impact**—Sanitary sewer service is available along Gulling Street. The project will  
13 have no wastewater disposal impacts.

14 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

15 **4.07 Hazards And Hazardous Materials**

16 The site is currently undeveloped. Most of the adjacent parcels are undeveloped, although  
17 the City has approved development of the Woodbridge project. Extensive forested areas  
18 occur in the project’s vicinity. Scars of a major 1989 wildfire are visible on the project  
19 site.

20 The SHEIR concluded that its project created a significant impact for exposure of people  
21 or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. It  
22 emphasized the presence of undeveloped forest south of its project site, the evidence of  
23 past forest fires, and the significant risk of wildland fires in the Portola area. To reduce  
24 the potential impact to a less than significant level, it As a mitigation measures, it  
25 proposed preparation of a Fire Safe Plan as required by the California Department of  
26 Forestry and Fire Protection to:

- 27 • Develop fuel breaks at the southern boundary of the Sierra Highlands  
28 subdivision,
- 29 • Development of defensible spaces around all homes and commercial  
30 buildings,



- Provision for emergency wildland fire water supply,
- Incorporation of road access and emergency exits in the road network,
- Formation of a legal entity for maintaining fuel modification areas and enforcement of Fire Safe Plan provisions,
- Development of an emergency evacuation plan,
- Development of an education program for residents and commercial employees,
- And prohibition of wooden fences in the residential lots along the south perimeter of its project area.

In compliance with the SHEIR mitigation measures and the City's Findings,<sup>3</sup> the AOC's project design incorporates Fire Safe construction features (see Section 2.3).

**4.07.1 Will the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?**

**No Impact**—The project proposes the construction of a new courthouse facility that would not require the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The use of materials would be limited to commonly available, routinely used cleaning products and infrequent applications of pesticides and herbicides to landscaped areas. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**4.07.2 Will the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?**

**No Impact**—As explained in Section 4.07.01, the project does not involve the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The use of materials would be limited to commonly available, routinely used cleaning products and infrequent applications of pesticides and herbicides to landscaped areas. Therefore, the project has no impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.07.3 Will the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or**  
2 **acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter**  
3 **mile of an existing or proposed school?**

4 **No Impact**—As stated in Response 4.07.01, the operation of the new courthouse facility  
5 will not involve the use, storage, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore,  
6 there will be no impacts related to hazardous materials, substances, or waste.

7 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

8 **4.07.4 Will the project be located on a site that is included on a list of**  
9 **hazardous materials sites complied pursuant to Government Code**  
10 **Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to**  
11 **the public or the environment?**

12 **No Impact**—The project site is not on a list of hazardous materials sites. Therefore, the  
13 construction or operation of the proposed courthouse facility would not create any impact  
14 related to hazardous sites.

15 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

16 **4.07.5 For a project located within an airport land-use plan or, where such a**  
17 **plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public**  
18 **use airport, Will the project result in a safety hazard for people residing**  
19 **or working in the project area?**

20 **No Impact**—The project site is not located within an airport land-use plan area or within  
21 2 miles of any airport. Therefore, the project would not create an airport-related safety  
22 hazard.

23 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

24 **4.07.6. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, Will the project**  
25 **result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project**  
26 **area?**

27 **No Impact**—The project site is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, the  
28 project would have no impact on safety levels with respect to private airstrips.

29 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.07.7 Will the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with**  
2 **an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

3 **No Impact**—The AOC’s proposed project design provides access to Gulling Street and  
4 the City’s proposed Woodside street; therefore, the project will not create barriers, access  
5 limits, or dead-end roadways that interfere with emergency response efforts or evacuation  
6 plans. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

7 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

8 **4.07.8 Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss,**  
9 **injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands**  
10 **are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with**  
11 **wildlands?**

12 **Potentially Significant Impact**—As explained above, the AOC recognizes the project  
13 site has had forest fires in the past, the risk of wildland fires in the area is significant, and  
14 the project increase the exposure of people and structures to wildland fires. However,  
15 based on the conclusions of the City’s Findings and Woodside MND that mitigation  
16 measures reduce the potential impacts to a level that is less than significant and the  
17 AOC’s design incorporates features that improve the courthouse’s fire safety (see section  
18 2.3), the AOC concludes that the impacts related to wildland fires are less than  
19 significant.

20 **Mitigation Measures:** The following mitigation measure will reduce wildland fire-  
21 related hazard impacts to a level that is not significant:

- 22 • Hazards 1—Incorporation of Fire Safe construction features including roof  
23 assemblies that are rated as “Class A;” use of fire-resistant siding materials  
24 and wall assemblies that provide protection from intrusion of flames and  
25 embers; roof, wall, and attic vents that resist the intrusion of flames and  
26 embers into the structure’s attic area; windows that have a fire-protection  
27 rating of not less than twenty minutes; and eaves and soffits that are protected  
28 by materials approved for one-hour fire resistive construction and
- 29 • Hazards 2—The AOC’s design and maintenance will include a landscaping  
30 design that emphasizes a defensible space approach to slow the advance of a  
31 potential wildland fire through use of fire-resistant plants and other features;

## 4.08 Hydrology And Water Quality

### Environmental Setting

The site has no water body. An unnamed intermittent creek (locally known as Wildcat Creek) is approximately 125 feet northeast of the project site (the creek flows between Gulling Street and the Little League fields), and an intermittent drainage is on the parcel immediately northwest of the project's parcel. The site is not in the 100-Year FEMA flood zone.

As discussed in Section 4.04, there is a small, shallow water course along the northwest corner of the AOC's proposed parcel. AOC staff investigated the water course area in April 2007; due to dry conditions of the 2006-2007 winter, AOC staff are uncertain of the wetland status of the water course area. The AOC's design does not include any structures or construction activities in the water course.

Runoff on the site currently flows towards Gulling Street and then flows along the existing slopes on the southern and southwestern edges of Gulling Street. Near the entrance to the Portola High School's parking lot on Gulling Street, there is a culvert that extends from the parking lot area to the opposite side of Gulling Street. From the culvert, runoff drains into Wildcat Creek.

The California Water Resources Control Board, through the Redding Office of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), regulates waste discharges into waters of the State through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit system.

#### 4.08.01 Will the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

**Less Than Significant Impact**—During construction, the AOC's contractor will clear the site, excavate and stockpile soil, and grade the site. Site preparation and excavation may expose loose soil to potential erosion, which could potentially move offsite. Since the proposed site is larger than one acre, the contractor must prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to identify sources of sediments and pollution that could potentially affect storm water quality. The SWPPP would also identify and implement storm water prevention measures to reduce pollution. Therefore, the AOC expects potential water quality and waste discharge impacts from the proposed project to be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1    **4.08.02 Will the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere**  
2           **substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net**  
3           **deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table**  
4           **level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop**  
5           **to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for**  
6           **which permits have been granted)?**

7    **Less Than Significant Impact**—The proposed project site replaces the existing leased  
8    courtroom space, and it will create a very minor increase in water use. The site's two  
9    acres currently provide groundwater recharge, but this recharge area is very minor  
10   compared to the surrounding valley's area. Therefore, the project's potential groundwater  
11   impacts are less than significant.

12   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

13   **4.08.03 Will the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the**  
14           **site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or**  
15           **river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on**  
16           **or off site?**

17   **Less Than Significant Impact**—There are no streams or rivers on or within the vicinity  
18   of the proposed project site. The AOC's design will not change existing drainage patterns  
19   on the site. The AOC understands that the City of Portola will require the Wade  
20   Associates (owners of the Woodbridge Development) to propose modifications to  
21   Gulling Street drainage.<sup>18</sup> The AOC will coordinate any future necessary courthouse-  
22   related drainage changes with the City and Wade Associates.

23   The project covers approximately two acres, and the AOC's project will include  
24   requirements that the contractor will prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan  
25   and provide measures to minimize runoff concerns, erosion, siltation, and water quality  
26   impacts (see Section 2.3). The project will include measures to prevent substantial  
27   erosion or siltation, the AOC concludes that the project's impacts on erosion and siltation  
28   will be less than significant.

29   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>18</sup> Personnal communication, James Murphy, City Manager, City of Portola and Dan Bastian, P.E., City Contract Engineer, City of Portola/Bastian Engineering to Jerry Ripperda, AOC. April 17, 2007

1 **4.08.04 Will the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the**  
2 **site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or**  
3 **river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a**  
4 **manner that would result in flooding on or off site?**

5 **Less Than Significant Impact**—As explained in Section 4.08.3, there are no streams or  
6 rivers on or within the vicinity of the proposed project site. The project covers  
7 approximately two acres, and the AOC's project will include requirements that the  
8 contractor will prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and provide measures to  
9 minimize runoff concerns, erosion, siltation, and water quality impacts (see Section 2.3).  
10 Since the project will construct some impervious areas for parking, the project will  
11 increase runoff. However, since the total site is only two acres and the project's  
12 impervious area will cover approximately one-half acre, the project's runoff will not be a  
13 substantial increase in runoff. Since the project site is small and the project will include  
14 measures to prevent substantial runoff, the AOC concludes that the project's impacts on  
15 runoff-induced flooding will be less than significant

16 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

17 **4.08.05 Will the project create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the**  
18 **capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide**  
19 **substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

20 **Less Than Significant Impact**—As stated in section 4.08.04, the proposed project does  
21 not propose sufficient impervious surfaces to substantially increase the amount of runoff  
22 from the site and the increased runoff will not exceed the capacity of storm water  
23 drainage systems. In addition, the proposed project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention  
24 Plan requirements will ensure that the AOC's contractor will adopt best management  
25 practices to incorporate inlet filtration devices to capture potential pollutants from the  
26 storm drain runoff and utilize landscape areas for filtration of runoff. Therefore, the  
27 project's impacts are less than significant.

28 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

29 **4.08.06 Will the project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

30 **Less Than Significant Impact**—The AOC will require the project's construction  
31 contractor shall secure the Central Valley RWQCB's approval of a Storm Water  
32 Pollution Prevention Plan to avoid degradation of water quality; in addition, the AOC  
33 will require inspection, monitoring, and maintenance of the SWPPP's best management

1 provisions in the contractor's bid package. Therefore, the project's impacts are less than  
2 significant.

3 **Mitigation Measures:** No further mitigation measures are required.

4 **4.08.07 Will the project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as**  
5 **mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate**  
6 **Map or other flood hazard delineation map?**

7 **No Impact**—The proposed project does not include housing. Therefore, the project has  
8 no impact.

9 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

10 **4.08.08 Will the project place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures**  
11 **that would impede or redirect flood flows?**

12 **No Impact**—As discussed above, the site is not within a designated flood zone.  
13 Therefore, the proposed project has no impact.

14 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

15 **4.08.09 Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk**  
16 **involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a**  
17 **levee or dam?**

18 **No Impact**—As previously discussed, the proposed project is not within a designated  
19 flood area and is not downstream from a dam or levee; therefore, the project will not  
20 expose people or structures to significant risks related to the failure of a dam or levee.  
21 Therefore, the project has no impact.

22 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

23 **4.08.10 Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk**  
24 **involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

25 **No Impact**—As stated in section 4.07, there is no water body near the project site;  
26 therefore, there is not risk of seiche or tsunami. Since the project site is relatively flat and  
27 distant from slopes, there is no risk of mudflows. Therefore, the project has no impact.

1    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation is required.

## 2    **4.09 Land Use And Planning**

### 3    **4.09.1 Will the project physically divide an established community?**

4    **No Impact**—The project site is only two acres will not physically divide the community.  
5    Therefore, the project has no impact.

6    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### 7    **4.09.2 Will the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or** 8       **regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including,** 9       **but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program,** 10      **or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating** 11      **an environmental effect?**

12   **No Impact**—The project is consistent with the City’s Sierra Highlands Master Plan and  
13   the City’s Woodside MND. Therefore, the project has no impact.

14   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### 15   **4.09.3 Will the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or** 16      **natural community conservation plan?**

17   **No Impact**—There is no applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community  
18   conservation plan that includes the project site. Therefore, the project has no impact.

19   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.



1     **4.10 Mineral Resources**

2     **4.10.1 Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would**  
3         **be of value to the region and the residents of the state?**

4     **No Impact**—There are no mineral resources of regional value at the project site.  
5     Therefore, the project has no impact.

6     **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

7     **4.010.2 Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource**  
8         **recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other**  
9         **land-use plan?**

10    **No Impact**—The site is not a delineated mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the  
11    project has no impact.

12    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

13    **4.11 Noise**

14    **Environmental Setting**

15    The Portola General Plan emphasizes the community’s relative quiet and very low noise  
16    levels—except for traffic along State Route 70 and railroad operations. The General Plan  
17    states that the City has considered noise generated by the railroad and traffic along major  
18    roads in the City’s establishment of the pattern of planned land uses depicted on the  
19    General Plan Land Use Diagram. The Plan also stated the City’s intent to minimize the  
20    exposure of community residents to excessive noise. Traffic volumes are used to estimate  
21    the future noise levels along major streets.

22    The County’s General Plan Noise Element designates compatibility criteria for  
23    community noise levels. The County’s noise element specifies that residential land uses  
24    are compatible with exterior noise levels up to 65 dB L<sub>dn</sub>. The City’s General Plan sets  
25    noise limits for transportation noise sources; **Table 5 lists the noise limits.** Brown-  
26    Buntin Associates, Inc. measured short-term noise levels in August 2000 on Gulling

Street at a site approximately 330 feet northwest of the project site; Table x2 lists the noise results.

The City's Woodside MND concluded that there are no existing noise or vibration levels in excess of standards that would impact future residents and employees of the project site. However, the City's Woodside MND concluded that the Woodside project's construction activities will cause a temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the Woodside project vicinity. The document's analysis concluded that mitigation measures included in the SHEIR and the General Plan's policies and standards will reduce the impact level to less than significant. The mitigation measures included:

- Construction activities shall be limited to daylight hours between 7:00 am. and 7:00 pm. in areas where sensitive noise receptors are located. No construction activities shall be permitted on Sundays or federal holidays, and
- Construction equipment and generators shall be fitted with heavy-duty mufflers specifically designed to reduce noise impacts in areas where sensitive noise receptors are located in compliance with the City of Portola General Plan Noise Element.

**Table 5. Short-Term\* Noise Measurements On South Gulling Street**

Sound Levels***	dB
<b>L<sub>50</sub>*</b>	51.4
<b>L<sub>eq</sub>*</b>	61.5
<b>L<sub>max</sub>*</b>	80.8
* 15 minutes **L <sub>50</sub> =The sound level exceeded 50% of the time during a sample interval; L <sub>eq</sub> =Equivalent Sound Level—the sound level containing the same total energy as a time-varying signal over a given sample period. L <sub>eq</sub> is typically computed over 1-, 8-, and 24-hour sample periods; L <sub>max</sub> = The maximum sound level recorded during a noise event *** Measured by Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc. on August 25, 2000	

The proposed project site is undeveloped. Adjacent areas around the proposed project site include additional undeveloped areas, Portola High School athletic fields, and Little League baseball fields. The Little League baseball fields are approximately 300 feet from the project site, while the Eastern Plumas Hospital and are approximately 1,000 feet and 500 feet, respectively, from the proposed courthouse site. There are no other nearby sensitive noise receptors such residences, nursing homes, day care centers, schools, parks and open space, but the City's approval of the Woodbridge development will allow substantial development near the site in the future.

1 **4.11.1 Will the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise**  
2 **levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or**  
3 **noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?**

4 **Potentially Significant Impact**—During construction, workers' operation of  
5 construction equipment will generate noise. While the noise contribution from worker  
6 vehicles would be temporary and small, the noise from construction equipment may be  
7 appreciable for short periods of time. The operation of construction equipment can result  
8 in maximum short-term noise levels ranging from 80 dB to 95 dB. These levels may be  
9 significant depending on the duration, but mitigation measures would minimize the  
10 impacts. For example, following the General Plan policies, noise levels associated with  
11 the construction activities would be limited to daytime hours (7 AM to 5 PM). Given the  
12 short-term nature of the noise, the impacts would be less than significant with the  
13 mitigation measures below.

14 After construction is complete, the additional vehicles traveling to the site will increase  
15 noise levels in areas adjacent to Gulling Street. However, since the project's traffic  
16 increases will be very minor, the traffic-related noise increase will be minimal, and the  
17 impacts from the additional vehicles will be less than significant.

18 **Mitigation Measures:** The following mitigation measures will reduce construction noise  
19 impacts to less than significant levels:

- 20 • NOISE 1—Limit generation of loud noises to normal business hours between  
21 7 AM and 5 PM,
- 22 • NOISE 2—Locate staging area and stationary equipment as far as possible  
23 from sensitive receptors (such as the Little League parks and Portola High  
24 School), and
- 25 • NOISE 3—Ensure all construction equipment is properly maintained and  
26 operated and are equipped with mufflers.

27 **4.11.2 Will the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of**  
28 **excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?**

29 **Potentially Significant Impact**—During construction, ground-borne vibration and noise  
30 may be generated by large trucks and other heavy equipment during grading and  
31 construction of the courthouse. Since the building is only one story tall and will not  
32 require an extensive foundation, the project site is approximately 500 feet from the  
33 nearest sensitive receptor (a building of the Portola High School), and the ground-borne  
34 vibration will be for only a limited duration, the construction-related vibration levels will  
35 be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** Implement Mitigation Measure NOISE 1.

**4.11.3 Will the project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less Than Significant Impact**—The proposed project will produce a small increase to nearby traffic and add to the existing traffic-related noise levels. The increased traffic will primarily be passenger vehicles that do not generate as much noise as large transport trucks. Also, these vehicles would likely travel to and from the site during limited times of the day. Most of the new arriving vehicles would come during the peak morning traffic hour, and these vehicles will leave gradually throughout the late morning and afternoon. Due to the project’s small traffic increase, the permanent increase in average daily noise levels will not be significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**4.11.4 Will the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less Than Significant Impact**—The increase in noise levels associated with construction of the proposed project may result in significant short-term noise impacts to the nearby sensitive receptors as discussed in part 4.11(a). The implementation of the part 4.11(a) mitigation measures would reduce the impact to less than significant levels.

**Mitigation Measures:** Implement Mitigation Measures NOISE 1 through NOISE 3.

## **4.12 Population And Housing**

**4.12.1 Will the project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?**

**No Impact**—The project proposes to construct a new courthouse on an approximately two-acre site. The proposed project will not induce substantial population growth or result in a significant increase in employment. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

1     **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

2     **4.12.2 Will the project displace substantial numbers of existing housing,**  
3             **necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

4     **No Impact**—The proposed project involves construction of a replacement courthouse  
5     and will not displace any existing housing. Therefore, the project will have no impact on  
6     existing housing.

7     **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

8     **4.12.3 Will the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating**  
9             **the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

10    **No Impact**— The proposed project involves construction of a replacement courthouse  
11    and will not displace any people. Therefore, the project will have no impact on  
12    replacement housing.

13    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

14    **4.13 Public Services**

15    **4.13.1. Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts**  
16             **associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental**  
17             **facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the**  
18             **construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in**  
19             **order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other**  
20             **performance objectives for fire protection?**

21    **No Impact**—The proposed project will construct and operate a new courthouse facility to  
22    replace a leased facility. Residential development is not a part of the project. Therefore,  
23    the project will not create a substantially greater need for fire protection than already  
24    exists, and the project will have no impact on fire protection and emergency services.

25    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1 **4.13.2 Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated**  
2 **with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities,**  
3 **need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the**  
4 **construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in**  
5 **order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other**  
6 **performance objectives for police protection?**

7 **No Impact**—The Plumas County Sheriff’s Department and the Sierra County County  
8 Sheriff’s Department will provide security services to the new courthouse facility. The  
9 AOC and Superior Courts will continue to fund the security services. The proposed  
10 project will not increase the need for these services. Therefore, the project will have no  
11 impact with on police services.

12 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

13 **4.13.3 Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated**  
14 **with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities,**  
15 **need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the**  
16 **construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in**  
17 **order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance**  
18 **objectives for schools?**

19 **No Impact**—The proposed project will construct and operate a new courthouse facility.  
20 Residential development is not a part of the project. Therefore, the project will not create  
21 a substantially greater need for schools than already exists.

22 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

23 **4.13.4 Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated**  
24 **with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities,**  
25 **need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the**  
26 **construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in**  
27 **order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other**  
28 **performance objectives for parks?**

29 **No Impact**—The proposed project does not involve residential development and will not  
30 cause an increase in residential housing and the need for related additional parks in the  
31 surrounding area. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

32 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1    **4.13.5 Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated**  
2       **with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities,**  
3       **need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the**  
4       **construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in**  
5       **order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other**  
6       **performance objectives for other public facilities?**

7    **No Impact**— The proposed project does not involve residential development, and it will  
8    not cause an increase in residential housing and the need for related additional public  
9    facilities. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

10   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

## 11    **4.14 Recreation**

12   **4.14.1 Will the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional**  
13       **parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical**  
14       **deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?**

15   **No Impact**—The proposed project does not involve residential development, and it will  
16   not cause an increase in residential housing or an increase in the use of neighborhood and  
17   regional parks or other recreational facilities. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

18   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

19   **4.14.2 Will the project include recreational facilities or require the construction**  
20       **or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse**  
21       **physical effect on the environment?**

22   **No Impact**—The proposed project does not involve residential development or  
23   recreational facilities, and it will not require related construction or expansion of an cause  
24   an increase in residential housing or an increase in the use of neighborhood and regional  
25   parks or other recreational facilities. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

26   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

## 4.15 Transportation/Traffic

### Environmental Setting

As shown in Figure 1, State Route 70 extends along the north bank of the Feather River in Portola. Gulling Street intersects State Route 70 in central Portola, and it crosses the Feather River and extends southeasterly for approximately 1.2 miles through Portola before turning north. Major intersections with Gulling Street include Commercial Street and Fourth Avenue. The Plumas County Regional Transportation Plan identifies Gulling Street, Commercial Street, and Fourth Avenue as primary collector streets. The City's General Plan notes that current traffic conditions in Portola do not normally approach the traffic levels experienced in more urban areas. Most existing Portola streets and intersections operate well within the range of Level of Service<sup>19</sup> C or better. The City's Sierra Highlands EIR stated that the State Route 70/Gulling Street intersection had an AM Peak Hour Level-Of-Service "B" rating, and the Commercial Street/Gulling Street intersection had an "A" rating. The AOC understands that the City will continue to classify Gulling Street as an arterial street within the City.<sup>20</sup>

Regarding parking facilities, there is currently parking along both sides of Gulling Street from the intersection of Gulling Street/Fourth Street. In addition, there is currently a parking area adjacent to the City's Little League which are immediately north of the project site.

#### **4.15.1 Will the project cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact**—The proposed courthouse project will only have one courtroom. The AOC expects the proposed project's one courtroom to generate less than forty courthouse visitor trips per day. When a court calls jurors and holds trials, the AOC presumes that the peak court visitor population would be during the early morning and could bring twenty to thirty visitor vehicles to the building. The AOC concludes that the project will cause a very minor change in the City's south Gunning Street traffic, and that

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<sup>19</sup> "Level of Service" is a standard evaluation criterion of traffic engineers to describe traffic conditions. It is a measure of the existing or projected traffic compared to the theoretical capacity of a street or intersection to safely accommodate traffic. The evaluation considers volume of traffic, street and intersection design, signal timing, and other variables. The evaluation assigns a letter rating, such as "A" (denoting no restrictions on speed on an arterial and less than a 5-second wait at an intersection) to "F" (denoting stop and go movement along a street and delays of more than one green light cycle at an intersection).

<sup>20</sup> Personal communication, James Murphy, City Manager, City of Portola; Dan Bastian, P.E., City Contract Engineer, City of Portola/Bastian Engineering; and Karen Downs, City Contract Planner to Jerry Ripperda, AOC. April 17, 2007



1 the traffic increases will not be substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and  
2 capacity of the street system.

3 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

4

5 **4.15.2 Will the project exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of**  
6 **service standard established by the county congestion management**  
7 **agency for designated roads or highways?**

8 **No Impact**—As noted above, the Portola area does not have congested traffic areas.

9 **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

10 **4.15.3 Will the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature**  
11 **(e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g.,**  
12 **farm equipment)?**

13 **Potentially Significant Impact**—The proposed project site is relatively flat, but the  
14 project is located on a curvy portion of Gulling Street. The AOC has located the  
15 courthouse's driveway in the northwestern corner of the parcel. The current elevation of  
16 the proposed courthouse exit is below the elevation of Gulling Street along the  
17 northeastern corner of the proposed AOC courthouse parcel; therefore, drivers leaving the  
18 courthouse's parking lot and turning left onto northbound Gulling Street will have a  
19 restricted view of traffic proceeding from the City's proposed Gulling Street/Woodbridge  
20 Street intersection. The AOC considers this restricted vision a hazard that creates a  
21 potentially significant impact

22 **Mitigation Measures:** The following mitigation measure will reduce design hazard  
23 impacts to less than significant levels:

- 24       • **TRAFFIC 1**—The AOC will raise the topographic elevation of the project's  
25 Gulling Street driveway to a sufficient height to provide a clear view of  
26 Gulling Street traffic that is proceeding northbound from the City's proposed  
27 intersection of Gulling Street/Woodbridge Street.

28

1    **4.15.4 Will the project result in inadequate emergency access?**

2    **No Impact**—The AOC’s development of the project site will not have design features  
3    that restrict emergency access, and the project’s location on Gulling Street does not limit  
4    emergency access. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the project will not affect  
5    emergency access.

6    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

7    **4.15.5 Will the project result in inadequate parking capacity?**

8    **Less Than Significant Impact**—As noted in section 4.15.1, the AOC expects the project  
9    to generate a maximum demand of approximately fifty trips per day. When the courts call  
10   jurors and hold trials, the AOC presumes that the peak court visitor population would be  
11   during the early morning and could bring twenty to thirty visitor vehicles to the building.  
12   Therefore, the AOC assumes that the courthouse’s peak trip demand will generate a  
13   maximum parking demand of approximately thirty vehicles. The project will provide  
14   approximately twenty on-site public parking spaces. Existing public parking in the Little  
15   League parking area across from the project site and additional street parking along  
16   Gulling Street will provide approximately ten to twenty parking spaces.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the  
17   AOC believes that there will be sufficient parking to meet the proposed project’s parking  
18   demand. The AOC therefore concludes that there will be parking impacts will be less  
19   than significant.

20   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

21   **4.15.6 Will the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs**  
22       **supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?**

23   **No Impact**—The proposed project does not locate the proposed courthouse in a locale  
24   that cannot be accessed with alternative transportation nor does the project include  
25   construction that will preclude alternative transportation. Therefore, the AOC concludes  
26   that the project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting  
27   alternative transportation.

28   **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>21</sup> The AOC understands that the City will continue to allow public parking along south Gunning Street and in the public parking areas adjacent to the Portola Little League fields. Personnal communication, James Murphy, City Manager, City of Portola; Dan Bastian, P.E., City Contract Engineer, City of Portola/Bastian Engineering; and Karen Downs, City Contract Planner to Jerry Ripperda, AOC. April 17, 2007

## 1     **4.16   Utilities/Service Systems**

2     The City of Portola provides wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal service for all  
3     residents, schools, commercial and industrial establishments within the City. Sierra  
4     Pacific Power Company provides electrical service to the vicinity of the proposed project.

5     The City of Portola Sewer has constructed its collection and treatment systems over a  
6     period of decades. The City upgraded its collection system and treatment plant during the  
7     1990's to address serious infiltration problems and inadequate treatment. The current  
8     system is adequate for the existing community, but the City must expand the collection  
9     system to accommodate the development anticipated in the Land Use Element. The  
10    City's wastewater system currently extends to the project site.

11    The project site is currently undeveloped, but the City's planned Woodbridge  
12    development includes construction of detention-settling basins and other surface water  
13    management systems in conformance with the City's standards.

### 14    **4.16.1 Will the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the** 15       **applicable RWQCB?**

16    **Less Than Significant Impact**—The City already provides a sewer main to the project  
17    site and the City's system is adequate for the existing population, and the proposed  
18    project will not provide housing that will increase the City's population. The proposed  
19    courthouse project will only have one courtroom and will replace the existing Portola  
20    court facility. Since the AOC's proposed project will add only one building that replaces  
21    the existing facility and the City's wastewater system is adequate for the existing  
22    population, the building's new wastewater treatment demand is very minor compared to  
23    the town's existing and planned build-out of wastewater facilities. Therefore, the AOC  
24    concludes that the project will not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the  
25    applicable RWQCB.

26    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

### 27    **4.16.2 Will the project require or result in the construction of new water or** 28       **wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the** 29       **construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

30    **No Impact**—As explained for issue 4.16.1, the AOC's proposed project will add only  
31    one building, and the building's new wastewater treatment demand is very minor  
32    compared to the town's planned build-out. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the project  
33    will not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment

facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, the existing wastewater system will be capable of handling the wastewater generated from the new facility.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**4.16.3 Will the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?**

**No Impact**—The AOC’s new courthouse will fill a portion of the City’s planned Woodbridge development. The City’s Mitigated Negative Declaration states that development of the Woodbridge project will increase runoff from the impervious surface coverage, but the future development will incorporate surface water management systems in conformance with City standards. The stormwater management system will incorporate detention-settling basins to capture and treat runoff before it leaves the project site. Since the AOC’s proposed project is only approximately two acres, the project will not cause expansion of the City’s planned facilities, and the facilities impacts will not be significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**4.16.4 Will the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?**

**No Impact**—The proposed courthouse project will only have one courtroom that will replace the existing Portola court facility, and it includes no housing. Since the AOC’s proposed project will add only one building, the AOC concludes that the project will cause a very minor change in the City’s water supply demand and that the City will not require new or expanded water entitlements. Therefore, the project will have no impacts on water supply entitlements.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

1     **4.16.5 Will the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment**  
2             **provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate**  
3             **capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the**  
4             **provider’s existing commitments?**

5     **Less Than Significant Impact**—As noted in section 4.16.1, the AOC’s proposed project  
6     will only have one courtroom that will replace the existing Portola court facility, and it  
7     includes no housing. The building’s new wastewater treatment demand will be very  
8     minor compared to the town’s existing and planned build-out of wastewater facilities.  
9     Therefore, the AOC concludes that the project will not have significant wastewater  
10    treatment capacity impacts.

11    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

12    **4.16.6 Will the project Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted**  
13             **capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs?**

14    **Less Than Significant Impact**—Since the AOC’s proposed project will only have one  
15    courtroom that will replace the existing Portola court facility and it includes no housing,  
16    the project’s solid waste disposal needs will be very minor compared to the town’s  
17    existing and planned build-out of solid waste facilities. Therefore, the AOC concludes  
18    that the project will not have significant solid waste disposal impacts.

19    **Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

## 20    **4.17   Mandatory Findings Of Significance**

21    **4.17.1 Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the**  
22             **environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife**  
23             **species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-**  
24             **sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community,**  
25             **reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or**  
26             **animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of**  
27             **California history or prehistory?**

28    **No Impact**—The proposed project site does not contain any endangered plant or animal  
29    species or cultural resources. Therefore, the proposed project does not have the potential  
30    to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or  
31    wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels,

threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**4.17.2 Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?<sup>22</sup>**

**No Impact**—The proposed project is consistent with the City’s General Plan, the Sierra Highlands Master Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, and the Woodbridge at Portola Tiered Mitigated Negative Declaration, and the AOC’s analysis did not identify any project-related cumulatively considerable impacts. The proposed project will not cause any impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

**4.17.3 Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

**No Impact**—Other than the impacts identified and mitigated above, the proposed project has no foreseeable substantial effects on human beings.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>22</sup> Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.

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